

Filed for intro on 03/26/2001

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 150

By McKee

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend James H. Blackwell for meritorious service.

WHEREAS, our nation was conceived by individuals who were willing to sacrifice their personal safety and concerns to ensure our individual and collective freedom, and the Volunteer State is especially proud to be the home of so many valiant men and women who have performed above and beyond the call of duty; and

WHEREAS, thousands of Tennesseans have continued this time-honored tradition of volunteerism through service in the United States Army; James H. Blackwell of Alcoa is one such estimable Tennessean who has served his country with honor and courage; and

WHEREAS, on "December 7, 1941, a date which will live in infamy, the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan"; Mr. Blackwell was stationed at Pearl Harbor during the attack that precipitated the involvement of the United States in World War II, and he remained an active participant in American efforts until the 1945 demobilization; and

WHEREAS, a light machine gunner, Mr. Blackwell was assigned to the Pacific Theatre of Operations; he saw action in the campaigns at the Solomon Islands, Guadalcanal, and Luzon and throughout the Central Pacific region; and

WHEREAS, for his laudable service to the United States, James H. Blackwell earned numerous decorations and citations, including: the Purple Heart, American Defense Service Medal with one Bronze Service Star, Asiatic Pacific Theatre Campaign Medal with four Bronze Service Stars, and Philippine Liberation Ribbon with one Bronze Service Star; and

WHEREAS, following the Japanese surrender, Mr. Blackwell returned stateside and was honorably discharged; for several years, he worked as a groomer at horse tracks throughout the country, earning the respect of his peers and the racing community for the admirable quality of his work, and he later worked with acumen and alacrity for National Concrete; and

WHEREAS, devoted to family and community values of the utmost merit, Mr. Blackwell has shared much love and companionship with his wife, Ethel, for many years; he is also the proud father of one step-daughter and grandfather of two step-grandchildren and two step-great-grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, an active and devout Christian, James H. Blackwell is a member of the Mars Hill Baptist Church, where he is an inspiration to many; currently the congregation's only World War II veteran, he has shared many valuable lessons learned from a lifetime of unique experience, and he is cherished by the members of the congregation, both young and old; and

WHEREAS, when the freedom of this state, our nation, and the world was threatened by foreign aggression, Mr. Blackwell joined the many men and women of his era who left their normal lives behind to oppose tyranny, defend liberty and ensure opportunity for the generations that would follow; and

WHEREAS, the courageous efforts of Mr. Blackwell's generation shaped the global landscape for decades to follow and earned them the rightful recognition as the "Greatest Generation" that the world has ever produced; and

WHEREAS, James H. Blackwell has served with courage and gallantry and deserves proper recognition for heroism both in the United States Army and in society today; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Blackwell performed his duties with the utmost skill, dedication and professionalism; his service can only be categorized as outstanding; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we hereby honor and commend James H. Blackwell for meritorious service in the United States Army and for serving as an embodiment of the values that are held by the ideal Tennessean, and we join with his family, friends, community, and church in offering our thanks for a difficult job well done.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.